

The Gallup Poll reports that 81% of mature American adults long to write a book. Are you one of them? Stop longing and start writing. Differentiate yourself from the rest by actually writing and publishing your work.

### **Retire and Write, the Perfect Way to Share Your Wisdom with the World**

Retirement is the perfect time to reassess the highlights of your productive years and pass those experiences on to others. Because you bring decades of learning to the task, retirement writing offers you a significant advantage over younger authors.

Why not consider writing about the field in which you specialized at work? Call on the years of knowledge that you compiled to make you an expert in your chosen discipline. You may have to spend a few hours catching up with changes in the field that have occurred since you retired, but with the contacts you made while actively working, that should pose no problem.

Possibly you'll want to start by writing articles before you tackle a book. Or you may prefer to continue writing only these shorter pieces. Trade journals are published on every imaginable category of business and professional life. Their editors are hungry for informative articles to fill the pages every month.

Years of pursuing a hobby can also translate into articles and/or books about your favorite pastime. Magazines that deal with each of these categories serve as an ideal place to begin honing your skills. Whether it be stamp collecting, sports, woodworking...you name it, there's a publication that caters to that interest and will accept your article if it is relatively well written and offers the reader solid information. Like trade journal editors, these editors are far more concerned with the content you offer than with your style of writing. They can always edit and clean up your prose, but they have to rely on you to supply the content.

A sure way to develop your confidence is to visit the reference room of your local library and peruse the pages of the *Writer's Market*, a directory of publications categorized by subject. Its 541 pages of information on thousands of magazines will show the variety of outlets that are available for your writing. You'll find the correct person to send your article to, how best to send it and a great deal of information on the likes and dislikes of the editorial staff.

### **The Internet**

The Internet boom of the past several years has created a heavy demand for informative articles and e-books. Some sites will pay you for your work; the others that do not, still offer the wide exposure that every author craves.

Check your favorite search engines for lists of article directories that distribute your work around the globe to hundreds of thousands of potential readers. While some charge a modest fee for this exposure, others like [www.ezinearticles.com](http://www.ezinearticles.com) rely on advertising to finance their site. They will distribute your articles at no cost.

If you do turn to the Internet to publish your output, it is important that you first create a web page. That serves as your base, as well as a place where readers can contact you. Whether an article appears online or off, paste it into your web site to create a library to which readers can turn to find more of your writing.

Web sites can be created very inexpensively using some of the self-help programs available to you on the Internet. Site designers are also available and range in price from as low as \$200 up to \$2000 depending upon the sophistication of the design you want. When you look for designers on the Web, make certain you view their gallery of home pages to help you make a fully-informed choice.

## **Writing a Book**

Tackling a book is somewhat harder than churning out an article. It is longer and therefore requires a good deal more content. If you choose to write a nonfiction book, you'll have to do more extensive research than is required for an article. All of the facts you discover must be organized into a logical, understandable pattern.

If your nonfiction book is a history, the chronology probably will determine the sequence. In the case of a memoir, you can choose the way you present your info, either organizing it from the time of your birth through each major event as it occurred or singling out a particular aspect of your life on which you want to concentrate. If you choose to write a how-to book, think in terms of the step-by-step way assembly instructions are written to guide you in putting together a toy or a piece of furniture.

## **Crafting a Novel**

Novelists have a good deal of organizational work before they begin to write. The plot must be massaged so that it maintains the interest of the reader by creating tension and excitement. All of the major characters must be analyzed carefully, and their characteristics recorded for future reference as you work your way through the book.

You must get to know your "people" as well as you know yourself...perhaps even better. In real life, coincidences can occur, but not in fiction. Every event, every mood, every change of attitude must have a motivation. That means the author must place a hint earlier in the text that allows the reader to accept what happens at a later time and accept it as believable.

Research includes making certain your depiction of a place is accurate and the time settings are realistic. Nothing can turn a reader off more quickly than to realize the author has made a blunder in his/her descriptions.

Obviously, we have just skimmed the essence of writing in all of these categories. If you use this as a starting point and combine it with the impressions you gained from reading other books in the same genre, you will undoubtedly be able to produce a readable manuscript.

You likely are one of the 81% of mature American adults who, the Gallup pollsters report, long to write a book. The difference is that you may actually fulfill your dream by completing the book, not just fantasizing and talking about it.